Bond Hall (1966)
Glen Bond was a Board member from 1961-1965. Bond was an officer at the Upjohn Company and had worked on biological programs for the Navy during World War II and taught biology and other science courses.

Brophy Hall (1962)
Born Byers served as president from 1946-1952. He implemented the co-educational policies of the school from private institution to a public one. During his tenure, two-thirds of the campus was destroyed in a fire and enrollments increased because of veterans programs.

Carlisle Hall (1957)
Carlisle Hall serves as a second residence for those stenographers. Charles Carlisle was a Ferris faculty member for 45 years from 1892-1937. His subjects included philosophy, civics, art and agriculture. He also served as principal president (1935), business manager, and Dean of the College Preparatory division.

Clark Hall (1960)
Emmanuel M. Clark served on the Ferris faculty for 40 years. His subjects included history, geography, civics, art and agriculture. He also served as principal president (1935), business manager, and Dean of the College Preparatory division.

Cramer Hall (1968)
Cramer Hall was the first of the “skyscrapers” and was named for William Cramer who taught botany and biology at Ferris. Cramer was known to spend hours searching the woods for specimens and maintained a greenhouse in the Old Main building.

Ewing Sports Complex (1974)
Robert Ewing served as president from 1956-1962. He also served as Dean of Men and was a respected lawyer with private practice in both Kalamazoo, and Detroit, Michigan.

Hallisy Hall (1958)
Hallisy Hall is one of several residence halls constructed in the late 1950s. This hall was named after Richard Hallisy, who was the Dean of the School of Commerce between 1954-1957. The 1971 Ferriscope yearbook was dedicated to his memory.

Helen Ferris Hall (1956)
This is the second oldest residence hall at the university and currently hosts the Honors program. Helen Gillespie Ferris was a Woodbridge Ferris’s first wife, and was one of the original instructors at the school. She was a teacher every student loved and never wanted to disappoint.

Henderson Hall (1965)
William D. Henderson ('31) was a student and friend of Woodbridge Ferris. After teaching at Ferris from 1932-1992, Henderson went on to teach physics at the University of Michigan and direct their extension division.

Johnson Hall (1959)
Johnson Hall has offices and classrooms used by both Arts and Sciences and Technology. Frank Johnson ('32) both attended and taught at Ferris Institute in the 1890s. Later Johnson became an automotive engineer for Cadillac, Motor Company and Ford Motor Company. He designed both the V-8 and Lincoln engines. During the Depression, he supported the school financially.

Masselink Commons (1955)
This complex was the first residence hall to open at Ferris. Previously, students rented rooms in town. Gerrit Masselink was Ferris’s second president from 1928-1929. He also taught mathematics, science and biology and was vital in the creation of the athletics program.

McKesey House (1989)
Housing the General Counsel’s office, this property was purchased by Ferris in 1989 from the Miles family. Gerald McKesey (’29) donated the money used to purchase the property. He was a respected lawyer with private practices in both Kalamazoo, and Detroit, Michigan.

McNerney Hall (1962)
This hall was named after Mary J. McNerney, faculty member for both German and Latin. McNerney also coached women’s basketball and served as the first Dean of Women.

Merrill Hall (1961)
This residence hall was named for Karl D. Merrill (’00) who both attended and taught at Ferris in commercial subjects. Merrill also was Dean of Commerce, Dean of Men and Vice-president (1937-1941) and acting president (1952).

Miller Hall (1963)
Judge William Miller (’32) served on the Board of Trustees from 1950-1962. He also had a private law practice, served as Delta County prosecutor (1912-1920) and as a probate judge from 1934-1936.

Merrill Hallisy Hallisy Hall was dedicated to his memory.

Pennock Hall (1967)
In the 1970s, when Ferris began the formation of the Michigan College for Health Professions, the building was converted to classroom and office space from a residence hall. Pennock Hall (’70) taught commercial subjects and served on the Ferris athletic board, keeping financial records for the teams.

Prakken Building (1951)
Prakken Building was originally named the East Building and renamed for Lawrence Prakken in 1976. Lawrence Prakken of Ann Arbor, Michigan served on the Ferris Board from 1950-1977. He was an educational publisher and a newspaperman. He was involved in the formation of the Michigan College of Optometry.

Pennington Hall (1962)
During his tenure the student body grew from 576 in 1928 to 3,500 in 1957. The 1957 Ferriscope yearbook records for the teams.

Pickell Hall (1964)
Pickell Hall was another residence hall built during the expansion of the mid 1960s. Dr. Pickell Hall (’55) was an acting president. Later he was a faculty member and Dean of the School of Business. He left Ferris in 1971 to practice dentistry.

Prakken Building (1951)
Prakken Building was originally named the East Building and renamed for Lawrence Prakken in 1976. Lawrence Prakken of Ann Arbor, Michigan served on the Ferris Board from 1950-1977. He was an educational publisher and a newspaperman. He was involved in the formation of the Michigan College of Optometry.

Puterbaugh Hall (1966)
Puterbaugh Hall also houses Honors students. Allen Puterbaugh taught physics and mathematics. He also was Dean of the College Preparatory program from 1944-1963.

Rankin Student Center (1958)
The student center was renamed for Donald Rankin in 1972. Donald Rankin had a long career in student services and was Dean of Men (1945-1962), Dean of Students (1953-1960) and Dean of Student Services (1969-1972). He also was the first Dean of Men’s residences, Rankin also was mayor of Big Rapids.

Spattfeld Center for Allied Health (1979)
Victor Spattfeld served as Ferris’s athletic director from 1922-1952. He also was Dean of the College of Education and was vital in the creation of the athletics program.

Star Educational Center (1962)
Raymond Starr (’25) was instrumental in getting the state to accept the school as a state institution. Starr became the first chair of the Board of Trustees in 1950. Starr also served as Michigan’s attorney general, an associate justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and a federal district judge.

Swan Building (1966)
This building has long housed College of Technology classrooms and labs. It was named after Don Fred Swam, who oversaw the creation of the School of Technical and Applied Arts in the early 1960s. He died suddenly while the building was being constructed.

Taggart Hall (1964)
Gertrude Gates Taggart (’30) was married to W.C. “Top” Taggart and was an active civic resident of Big Rapids. She and her husband gave generously to the campus including the church, hospital, library and Ferris.

Time Center for Student Services (1967)
The Time Center for Student Services reopened in October 2002 after extensive renovation. It previously served as the campus library. Abigail Smith Timme (’11) attended Ferris Institute’s shorthand program. She worked with her husband Ernst Timme on development projects. In 1976, she received an honorary doctorate from Ferris State College.

Top Taggart Field (1957)
William Clanton “Top” Taggart (’11) played football for Ferris as an end and halfback. He went on to coach the team in 1912. Taggart fored the Petroleum Oil Company and remained a strong financial supporter. Ferris granted him an honorary doctorate in 1964 and a distinguished alumni award in 1968.

Travis Hall (1961)
Bert Scott Travis (’29) was another early graduate who returned to teach at the school. Among his subjects were civics, mathematics and spelling. He also worked in the business office. He co-owned part of the school between 1921-1931.

Vandercook Hall (1957)
Vandercook Hall is named after Colonel Roy C. Vandercook who was the original vice-chair of the Board of Trustees after Ferris became a state school in 1950. Vandercook was a friend of Governor Woodbridge Ferris. He also was instrumental in the formation of the Michigan state police and served as the first police commissioner.

Ward Hall (1963)
Mary Rood Ward was the Dean of Women from 1941-1951. She had worked her way up through the administration after starting in the business office assistant in 1931. In 1931, Ward was appointed as the faculty member.

Wheeler Pavilion (2001)
Both Frank Wheeler (’76) and son John Wheeler (’70) applied for the same spot on the HVAC program. Frank Wheeler was admitted, but John Wheeler attended the architectural technology program. John Wheeler was a 1997 winner of the distinguished alumni award, and has contributed substantially as an alumni.

Williams Auditorium (1962)
Originally named Starr Auditorium, the facility was renamed in 1956 after Michigan Governor G. Mennen Williams. Williams was the governor the formation of the Michigan state police and served as the first police commissioner.

We hope you’ve enjoyed our Tour of the 35 Named Buildings of Ferris State University.
Ferris State University
A Humble Beginning

Ferris State University first held classes in 1884 under the name of the Big Rapids Industrial School. It was located on the VanderSlius Block and provided a vocational education to lumberjacks, miners, farmer’s sons and daughters, and factory workers. In 1885, it became the Ferris Industrial School and moved to the northwest corner of Michigan and Maple Street. Old Main, the first permanent building, was built in 1893 on the corner of Oak and Ives Street. The name was changed to Ferris Institute in 1900. In 1924, Ferris Institute converted into a non-profit stock company. 1950 saw two major changes to Ferris. Ferris Institute became a state institution as a gift by the stockholders. Additionally, two of the three school buildings (Old Main and Pharmacy Building) burned, destroying much of the physical campus. The Alumni Building, built in 1929, was spared. The Institute was renamed Ferris State College in 1963. In 1987, the name changed to Ferris State University.